

Marine Fisheries Joint Patrol Helicopter**FY2008 Request: \$500,000**
Reference No: 42913**AP/AL:** Appropriation
Category: Public Protection
Location: Statewide**Project Type:** Equipment**Contact:** Dan Spencer, Director, Administrative Services**House District:** Statewide**Contact Phone:** (907)465-5488**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2007 - 09/30/2009**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

The Alaska Department of Public Safety (DPS) requests \$500,000 in federal receipt authority for the purchase of an R44 helicopter with an installed Alaska Land Mobile (ALMR) radio system using funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This helicopter will provide support to the mission of protecting Cook Inlet beluga whales, Prince William Sound black cod fisheries monitoring, and documentation of the long line halibut individual fishing quota fisheries in districts 3A / 3B in the Gulf of Alaska. This request is separate from the joint operational request known as the Marine Fisheries Patrol Improvements.

Funding:	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	Total
Fed Rcpts	\$500,000						\$500,000
Total:	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

None

Project Description/Justification:

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) requests \$500,000 for the purchase of a R44 helicopter using federal funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This helicopter will provide support to the mission of protecting the Cook Inlet beluga whales, Prince William Sound black cod fisheries monitoring, and documentation of the long line halibut individual fishing quota (IFQ) fisheries in districts 3A / 3B in the Gulf of Alaska.

This mission is part of the Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) that the Department of Public Safety has entered into with NOAA to enforce federal laws and regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; the Endangered Species Act of 1973; the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981; and the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982. Recognizing enforcement needs in the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea, the Department of Public Safety cooperates with the NMFS in enhanced patrols available through the Coastal Stewardship Act. The NMFS recognizes that Alaska maintains the assets and personnel for efficient patrols and rather than create a redundant infrastructure, they prefer to augment the state's programs.

Over the past few years, NOAA has become involved in the research and protection of the declining beluga whale population in Cook Inlet and other areas of the state. The once prolific population of whales has diminished to a point where they will

probably be added to the endangered species list in 2007. The whales are subject to illegal hunting, believed to be a partial cause of the decline. Throughout the summer and fall months, NOAA agents use Alaska Bureau of Wildlife Enforcement (ABWE) aircraft, when available at the Anchorage DPS Aircraft Section. Much of this work is currently done using fixed wing Super Cubs, because the sole DPS helicopter located in southcentral Alaska is dedicated primarily to search and rescue operations.

When investigating a dead whale, the NOAA agents need to get on the ground. Due to the nature of Cook Inlet, it is often unfeasible to get a fixed wing aircraft or boat to the carcass. The tides change rapidly and the water is often too rough for a vessel or floatplane. A helicopter on pontoons is the ideal platform to safely get to the carcass and conduct an investigation. It can land on the tidal flats nearby keeping itself and the agents out of harms way.

In Prince William Sound, ABWE will use the R44 to monitor both the state and federal black cod fisheries. Often times, fishers participating in these fisheries misrepresent their catch to allow themselves more IFQ.

In districts 3A and 3B of the regulatory areas for the Pacific halibut fishery, troopers will use the R44 to document fishing activities within both districts to avoid misreporting and over harvesting within districts.

The purchase of the R44 will bring additional benefits to the Department of Public Safety, including state resource enforcement during special programs throughout Alaska, search and rescue support, and providing a backup platform when the primary department helicopter is out of service.

A Clipper II with utility floats and options costs between \$358,000 and \$375,000. Some of the options include a four-point harness system, artificial horizon, slip skid indicator, front bubble windows, vertical compass, and an emergency locator transmitter (ELT). With additional costs such as special law enforcement radio equipment, transportation to Alaska, and painting of the aircraft, the total cost for this aircraft is estimated to be \$500,000.